

Press Release

September 22, 2005

PRINCIPAL FEDERAL OFFICIAL NAMED FOR HURRICANE RITA RESPONSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. – President George W. Bush has declared under the Stafford Act that an emergency exists in the State of Texas and the State of Louisiana, and ordered federal aid to supplement State and local response and recovery efforts in the areas affected by Hurricane Rita. That declaration effectively characterizes Hurricane Rita as an Incident of National Significance under the National Response Plan (NRP).

In accordance with the guidance provided in the NRP, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has designated Rear Admiral Larry Hereth, U.S. Coast Guard, as Principal Federal Official (PFO) for incident management purposes during the response and recovery operations for Hurricane Rita in Texas.

Rear Admiral Hereth has more than 32 years of experience managing federal assets and national and field operations. Rear Admiral Hereth will manage a federal Joint Field Office located in Austin, Tex. and coordinate federal government activities with state and local officials.

Rear Admiral Hereth reports to the Fifth Coast Guard District from an assignment at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C., as the Director of Port Security. In that capacity, he led the development and implementation of a new maritime security regime for vessels, facilities and ports throughout the United States. Rear Admiral Hereth has served as Commanding Officer or Port Captain in multiple duty stations, including New York, New Orleans, San Francisco, and at Coast Guard Headquarters. He also served as Chief of the Coast Guard's National Marine Environmental Response School, where he supervised pollution response courses and directed a national exercise program.

Rear Admiral Hereth is a 1973 graduate of the United States Coast Guard Academy with a Bachelor of Science degree. He also earned an MBA in 1992 from Florida Institute of Technology. Rear Admiral Hereth is a native of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Admiral Thad Allen, U.S. Coast Guard, previously designated as PFO for Hurricane Katrina response and recovery activities in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, will additionally serve as PFO for Hurricane Rita response and recovery activities in Louisiana.

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